

TURKEY IN EUROPE AND ITS DEPENDENCIES.

Map Showing the Danube Valley and the Several Turkish Strongholds Threatened by the Russian Armies, the Railroad Lines and the Positions of Servia and Montenegro.



THE RUSSIAN GAME.

Notes from the Headquarters at Kischeneff.

NARROW ESCAPE OF THE GRAND DUKE

Official Status of War Correspondents with the Russian Army.

Objective Point of the Asiatic Campaign.

Kischeneff, May 4, 1877.
There is a most important question which I desire to discuss in this letter, a question closely associated with the present war between Russia and Turkey, and because the time has come when a solution of it is absolutely necessary. I refer to the request of the newspaper correspondents to be permitted to follow the Russian army and have an *entrée* in their camps. This matter, of course, is of direct interest to the readers of newspapers, or, more properly writing, to the entire world, for the correspondent is the real representative of the public, an ambassador who goes forth to deal with salient facts, and it might be said in passing, without any specially flattering allusions to ourselves, that if all ambassadors performed their duties as conscientiously as the journalist the general conduct of affairs in the world would be vastly improved.

THE RUSSIAN AND THE PRESS.
On principle it seems to have been decided that no outsiders should follow the army, and journalists are to be excluded because they were considered factious and indiscreet in dealing with passing events. This was understood to be irrevocable, and there seemed to be a general acquiescence in the decision, when suddenly England organized a little bureau for the forwarding of letters and despatches; and so well was it organized that the least event was made known to the world almost as soon as it had transpired. To show how rapidly this bureau acted it need only be said that it has already reported victories by Turks which they have not yet won. Without the aid of this bureau these would probably never have been heard of. This very practical mode of procedure on the part of the English rather took the Chief of Staff of the Grand Duke Nicholas by surprise, and he began to reason thus:—"If every time that a Turkish corporal sees a Cossack in the distance England undertakes to inundate the two hemispheres with despatches stating that the Russian army has been put to route by force of bearing it repeated the word at last will come to believe it true if there is no one to contradict it. Now who can contradict it by simply telling the truth? The impartial correspondent."

Thus it came to be recognized that a journalist had his good side, and that it might be well to admit him to the army of the Czar. This decision was arrived

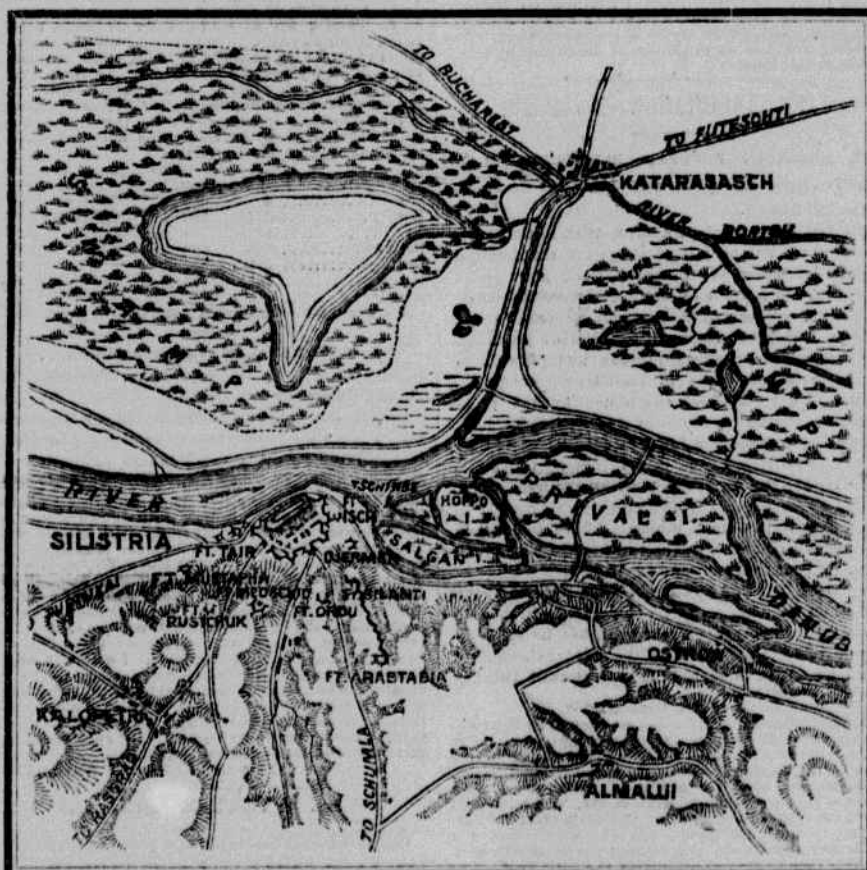
at in a general council held by the Commander-in-Chief while the Czar was still at Kischeneff. There were present His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Constantine and his son, Generals Nepokuchinski and Lovitzki and his first and second chiefs of staff—Prince Tcherkesski, Chief of Civil Service; Colonel Hasenkampf and General Ignatieff. It was the latter who pleaded the cause of the correspondents with the greatest warmth, and finally won the victory. But even after the idea was adopted another difficulty arose, namely—the putting into practice, which, in view of the habits of the country, was not so easy.

In Russia, as is well known, nothing is printed without the approval of the official censor, who approves or forbids the publication. There was naturally some intention to subject the foreign correspondents to this system. This proposition, however, could not be maintained for a moment. It was seen that the correspondents would offer an energetic opposition or would evade the rule. From another point of view under existing conditions persons passing for correspondents, and who, perhaps, do write for journals, which accept their letters at a very low price, circulate without being attached to any important newspaper. Among these workers there could easily glide another class of individuals, who at a given moment would be likely to send their information to any address but to a newspaper, and so compromise seriously the success of important military operations. It was after weighing these and other reasons that the following resolution was taken by the Grand Duke:—Correspondents of great newspapers duly presented by a guarantor, who will go security for them, will be duly authorized to accompany the army, and will be offered every facility. That is to say, they will be permitted to move about freely everywhere and will be furnished with all facilities for transportation, and an officer will be appointed to furnish them all the information they desire.

CHIEF OF THE CORRESPONDENTS.
This officer was immediately appointed, the choice falling on Colonel Hasenkampf, and permission was at once granted to two correspondents, one French and the other American. Word was immediately sent to them, and the following day they presented themselves to the Colonel, who was surprised at seeing them, as the reader can well understand. I must say that these two privileged persons have the reputation of being the greatest reporters in the world. Now at this moment both were suffering from sore feet. One had corns, and the other had been hurt by a fall from his horse, so that they arrived hobbling along on their crutches as best they could. Imagine the surprise of Colonel Hasenkampf, who expected to meet two men full of energy and activity, when two lame men presented themselves!

When these two cripples had taken seats, the Colonel, who is a charming man, stated that all that was asked of them was not to speak about the movements of the Russian troops while they were being carried off—which is only just—and to have sent to the staff copies of the journals they represent in order that their letters might be utilized in the book which is to be written about the war, and also, perhaps, though this was not hinted—to see that they are not too severe. This being understood, the Colonel sent the two journalists to the photographer's, because there remained one formality to be fulfilled—namely, the issue of the safe conduct—and to prevent errors as well as to prevent any killing the correspondents in order to get possession of their passports, it has been decided that the safe

PLAN OF SILISTRIA AND ITS DEFENCES.



Silistria is justly regarded by the Turks as one of the most important defensive positions held by them on the Danube. Immediately in front of the town on the Roumanian side of the river the country is low and marshy and intersected only by roads that can be easily blocked if the works are supported by gunboats on the river. The village of Katarabash can also be seized and converted into a strong *redoubt*, with easy and well covered distance from the river. Even monitors could be sent up the Borthis to aid in the defence of Katarabash. The numerous islands in the Danube below Silistria, however, afford considerable facilities for bringing to an army that has gained the northern bank and is not interrupted by gunboats. A place of crossing can be selected below the town and out of range of its guns; but the success of the operation would depend on the season and the river levels. It is evident from the plan of the defences, accurately given on the above map, that Silistria is dangerous from the east and south. From the east, because of the facilities for crossing the river on that side and from the south because the place is dominated by the hills toward Ragatz and Schumla, where an in-

vesting force could establish itself, while another part of the invading army could operate from the river side. The outlying forts are constructed chiefly of earthwork and form a semicircle of defence around the main wall at about five hundred yards distance therefrom. As the main wall and the works of the citadel, which is next to the river front, would soon succumb to modern rifled artillery, the defence of the town depends wholly on these outlying forts. The principal works are Fort Medschid and Arabash. The latter work is connected with Fort Ghilali, by a line of strong intrenchments, which are constructed along the crest of a hill and face toward the east. Fort Arabash tanks this line and is supported in turn by Fort Ordu, which also supports Fort Medschid. The western defences of the town are of a minor order, the engineers deeming the eastern lines more important. Besides, the width of the Danube above Silistria is such as to preclude the possibility of bridging it in the face of a few batteries of artillery on the Turkish side. It is probable that the Russians will approach Silistria from the westward, on the Bulgarian side of the river, but the Turks will erect additional defences and make a long and stubborn resistance.

have been taken. The soldiers will be able to recognize by the armistice those who will have a right to pass, and officers will be able, by means of the photograph, to examine the identity of the wearer. The correspondents will note what they see and Colonel Hasenkampf will keep them informed of what they might guess at. So that after wishing to have nothing to do with newspaper correspondents at first Russia has ended by doing what was never done before in any war by conferring on correspondents what may be regarded as official rank. However these precautions have produced considerable discontent. Those unlooked for advantages have had the result of begetting numerous demands for appointment, which in very few cases have been successful. At this moment only seven in all have received the desired authorization, which has already caused a chorus of complaints; but what will it be when the staff arrive at Bucharest, where a whole battalion of correspondents await its arrival?

EVENTS MARCH SLOWLY.
And since I have written the word "wait!" I may as well assure you that waiting plays a great part in this campaign. The plan of action is altogether different from that of the Germans in the last war. Everything was done by them with celerity. They pushed ahead at any cost. But the Danube allows both parties in the present struggle to operate at their ease. The Russians take up positions at the most advantageous points on the left bank, while the Turks fortify the right. If any sign of life is manifested and these military mathematicians it is by the gunboats that glide about the river; but they will not long continue their pre-empting, for the batteries on the banks and the torpedoes under the water will soon keep them quiet.

However, the other day, I am told, an officer of the staff, named Keller, taking advantage of the darkness, crossed over the Danube. He was accompanied only by four Cossacks, and was able to penetrate far enough into the Turkish lines to get at the telegraph, which he cut. This adventure, more heroic than useful, will not fail to call attention to this valiant officer.

THE RUSSIAN POLICY.
If, however, events are marching slowly in Europe the same cannot be said of Asia, where the invaders are advancing by forced marches toward Trebizond, which is the objective point. On this subject I must tell you a rumor which is gradually taking shape, and which I will endeavor to translate for you as well as I can. The European campaign will be only a show. Its aim is merely to keep the Turks on this side of the Bosphorus and permit Russia to have an army ready to meet any complications that may arise in the West. During this time Trebizond, which is the key to the commerce of the entire East, will be seized. What gives weight to these allegations is the profound preoccupation shown by Russian statesmen in view of the armed demonstration which England is preparing to make in Egypt. And especially the involuntary eagerness which General Ignatieff shows in talking about Asia. The ancient Ambassador to Constantinople is evidently the soul of what is going on, and it may perhaps be justly considered as his personal work. Whether these suppositions are true or false, too much importance must not be given to them, because in war unexpected events—chance, so to speak—direct affairs more than men. In all cases we should keep our readers informed on what is passing.

I have already said that waiting seemed to be the order of the day. Those who best obey it are the Jews, here very numerous and still on the increase.

These birds of prey do not wait like the vultures, who only appear after the battle to feed on the cadavers; they are here waiting their appetite beforehand, as you will see. A large contract was to be made. A telegram was sent to a big contractor. The Jews knew of the affair, because they loaf in the telegraph offices, as well as in the Post Office and everywhere else. They had read over the shoulder of the clerk and learned the conditions proposed. When the contractor arrived the contract had been given, for the Jews had taken it at a few capeccks lower than the contractor's offer. They also watch the soldiers, for whom silver and gold roubles have been specially provided. Each man has received eight roubles, and little accustomed to handle anything but paper money, the soldier does not know the real value of his small tortoise, which the Jews succeed in extracting from him at about half its value. All this is done with an accompaniment of kicks, which the Jew takes very philosophically on the one hand while he fills his pockets on the other. When the bargain is concluded the kicks are seen no more, but the silver roubles remain.

THE FIRST SHOT.
Last Saturday His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke moved his quarters for the first time. News came that the Turks had appeared before Braila with five gunboats. This demonstration was, properly speaking, the beginning of hostilities. Fifteen shells fell in the town without doing more damage than wounding an unfortunate Roumanian, who is not yet dead, but who might as well be. The field batteries replied. A smokescreen and a rudder of two gunboats were carried away, and two Turks fell victim in this demonstration. They are with the Roumanian the only victims so far on the Danube. The offensive was undertaken at the same time at Ibrail, Reni and Galatz. It was to the first of these towns that the Grand Duke hurried. He reviewed the troops, chatting with the soldiers, who are very much attached to him. On their side the Turks paid him their respects. This time it was no longer gunboats which fired, but monitors. Two shots were very well directed. They were eight inch shells, but neither of them exploded. One of these fell within a few yards of the Grand Duke. The Russian batteries not having received their heavy guns did not reply. However some Clerks, or if you prefer it Bash Bazouks, who from adjacent heights were watching the great distance the whistling of the balls could be heard unpleasantly close. Proceedings stopped there. The Grand Duke returned to Kischeneff yesterday evening. No news has been received about the operations in the Caucasus. The departure of the staff is now fixed for the 22d. Headquarters will be established north of Bucharest, at Ploesti.

FIRE ON CANAL STREET.

Shortly after eight o'clock last night a fire broke out on the third floor of the four story brick building No. 284 Canal street, owned by John Morton. The engines were soon on the spot, but the flames gained considerable headway before being extinguished. The losses are as follows:—Third floor, occupied by Kresser & Co., dealers in fancy goods, \$8,000; second floor, Charles Carpenter, hoop skirts, \$500; first floor, Leggett & Denholm, furnishing goods, \$500. The fourth floor, which was occupied by C. & H. Sullivan, woolen goods, was slightly damaged by water and smoke. The building was damaged to the extent of about \$1,000. How the fire originated is unknown.